
Z-2453
WISER INVESTMENTS
R1 & GB TO R3

STAFF REPORT
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REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, represented by attorney Daniel Teder, is requesting the rezoning of 16.934 acres from R1 and GB to R3 for an apartment community. The site is located on the south side of Elston Road between Old Romney Road and South Beck Lane, City of Lafayette, Fairfield 31 (SE) 23-4.

ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The land in this request is mostly zoned R1 with GB zoning at the corner of Old Romney and Elston as well as along the southern border of this tract. This pattern has existed since the inception of zoning in the county and does not appear to have followed any parcel lines. Immediately south of this site is more GB and R3 zoning while R3 is north across Elston Road.

In 2008 the County Commissioners petitioned to rezone this same site to GB in anticipation of filing a special exception for a proposed Juvenile Justice Center but the request was withdrawn before the APC meeting (Z-2373).

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

Nearly every land use conceivable is present in the area including single-family homes, multi-family apartments, light industry and commercial. The land in this request has been farmed for decades, except an area of woods at the site's southwest corner which is identified as a wetland. A church and two single-family homes are located between this site and Elston Road. Uses to the north and south include apartment buildings and two single-family homes with light industry and commercial beyond. Several other single-family homes line Old Romney Road and South Beck to the east and west.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The site has frontage along Old Romney Road, Elston Road (in two locations) and a corner of the tract touches South Beck Lane. Elston Road is classified as an urban secondary arterial with 2,362 vehicles passing this site daily in 2008; Old Romney (with 1,893 vehicles per day in 2004) and South Beck (with 2,647 vehicles in 2006) are both classified as urban local roads.

In 2002, a road project by the City of Lafayette realigned Old Romney Road at its intersection with Elston Road. This section of Old Romney is the only surrounding road built with curb and gutter.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

City sewer and water are located in the rights-of-way of Elston, South Beck and Old Romney.

The Zoning Ordinance requires a 'type c' bufferyard 20' in width where R3 zoning abuts GB zoning.

The National Wetlands Inventory map shows an area of wetland near the site's southwest corner. This area, that is wooded, will remain as such according to petitioner's attorney.

STAFF COMMENTS:

This area of our community has developed with a mix of uses ranging from commercial and industrial, to apartment buildings and single-family homes. No one single land use dominates in the vicinity. While there have been a few changes in zoning in the area, the mix of uses has remained fairly constant for many years.

In 2001 the City of Lafayette annexed this part of Fairfield Township. Since then, various road improvements have taken place and sewer and water services have now become available to the area. These improvements have facilitated many new developments, including various business, industries and apartment buildings. This part of our community is now primed for development and an agricultural field makes little sense on this valuable ground in a sewerred urbanizing area.

Petitioner is proposing an apartment complex similar to the development due north across Elston. According to petitioner's attorney, two buildings will be constructed in each phase. Although the number of phases is unknown, amenities such as a playground and exercise site would be completed toward the end of the project. A wooded area on the southern edge of this land is identified as a wetland on the National Wetlands Inventory. Staff has been advised this area will remain as it currently exists. Petitioner will need to file a multi-family subdivision request.

While many commercial and light industrial users are located nearby, many multi-family structures have been built in the area, namely to the north (Southridge Commons). If there is a development trend in the area it has been to more dense uses. The single-family homes are remnants of a more pastoral era. This area of infill is located in close proximity to the relocated US 231 and is on a bus route allowing for a more dense style of residential development which is appropriate to this part of the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval